



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

January 20, 2014

Julie Hamos
Director
Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services
401 S. Clinton Street
Chicago, IL 60607

Dear Director Hamos,

On behalf of the Illinois State Alliance of YMCAs, I respectfully submit comments on the Illinois Waiver Application to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The Illinois State Alliance of YMCAs brings together 108 YMCA locations working in 120 communities and engaging more than 548,000 members in Illinois to strengthen the foundations of community through youth development, health living and social responsibility. Illinois Ys are committed to forwarding wellness and prevention strategies that offer support to individuals and families in the community through non-clinical interventions.

The Alliance appreciates the work done by you and your staff to develop this waiver, building on the initial concept paper and the Alliance for Health work. We understand that much of the details will be defined and articulated during the implementation of the waiver once it is approved by CMS and a formal rate has been established. We look forward to continued and ongoing opportunities to give input and provide feedback once the waiver is approved.

We continue to support the inclusion of *population health management* as one of the four pathways identified in the waiver. Ys across the state provide healthy living and prevention services that promote health and improve health outcomes for individuals and families. We appreciate that you have adopted a proactive view of health that includes wellness and prevention programs that address health concerns before and as they arise rather than waiting until there are serious medical impacts resulting from chronic conditions.

The Alliance supports the inclusion of nonmedical services, supports and providers into the community needs assessment process and in the development and implementation of the Regional Health Hub approach. We are encouraged that Regional Health Hubs will assist local communities to link community interventions and to provide technical assistance in selecting evidenced-based interventions appropriate for those communities such as the Diabetes Prevention Program. We encourage at every step of the development of population health management through the waiver, community organizations, non-clinical staff and non-medical interventions be considered along with more traditional medical models. Community organizations should also be included in any established performance-based contracting models and cost saving incentive structures so that they will be able to receive similar incentives as hospitals and other medical groups to improve outcomes and decrease costs.

The YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program is a great example of how an evidenced-based program can improve health, decrease medical interventions and save money. This evidenced-based program helps adults at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes reduce

their risk of acquiring the disease by taking steps that will improve their overall health and well-being. Research by the National Institutes of Health has shown that programs like the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program can reduce the number of new cases of type 2 diabetes by 58%, and 71% in adults over the age of 60. The goal for individuals is to reduce body weight by 7% and increase physical activity to 150 minutes per week. When studies were done, this intervention was found to be more cost effective than many drugs.

The Alliance and our members look forward to working with the Department of Healthcare and Family Services to expand access to wellness and prevention services for individuals and families across the state. If you have any questions about our comments, you can reach Meg Cooch, Executive Director, at 773-558-5136 or meg.cooch@illinoisymcas.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Andrew Thornton", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andy Thornton
Chair
Illinois State Alliance of YMCAs

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Meg Cooch", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Meg Cooch
Executive Director
Illinois State Alliance of YMCA